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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Report of the Secretary-General*

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* The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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I. Introduction

1. In resolution 54/94, the General Assembly, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (A/54/484), and requested the Secretary-General to report to it, at its fifty-fifth session, on the development of cooperation between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations system. In furtherance of the objectives of the programme of cooperation between the two organizations, the Secretaries-General of the two organizations hold periodic consultations, both at the Summit meetings of OAU and at sessions of the United Nations General Assembly on issues relating to their respective programmes of work. Senior officials of the United Nations also hold discussions and exchange information with their OAU counterparts on specific areas of work. The special Security Council sessions held in December 1999 and in January 2000 on peace and security in Africa provided an opportunity for the United Nations and OAU to collaborate further and brainstorm on the options for dealing with some of the situations of conflict in Africa.

II. Background

2. The Secretaries-General of the United Nations and OAU adopted a programme of cooperation in 1998. The programme delineated areas in which projects would be developed by the two organizations for implementation within a period of two years. OAU and the United Nations also agreed to review the programme of cooperation at the end of two years and to design a new programme covering the following two years.

3. The most recent meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and OAU was held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 10 and 11 April 2000. It was convened to review and assess the state of the cooperation between the two organizations over the past two years and to discuss ways and means to enhance it over the next two years. It was co-chaired by Ibrahima Fall, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Ambassador Said Djinit, OAU Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Officials of the United Nations system and of OAU attended the meeting.

4. The meeting assessed the implementation of the recommendations of the 1998 session in an atmosphere of openness and candour. Particular focus was placed on progress achieved and problems encountered. The two organizations sought to put in place a realistic framework of cooperation, with recommendations that are realistic, focused and implementable and with an efficient mechanism for coordination and follow-up. They also sought to adopt an action-oriented and achievable programme for the period 2000-2002. They underscored the importance of their cooperation and reiterated their readiness to give it the utmost priority.

5. Particular emphasis was given to the constraints facing OAU, and it was underlined that the consultation should help OAU to strengthen its capacities.

6. In anticipation of the April 2000 consultation, OAU and the United Nations had each prepared a progress report. Although there was general appreciation of the improved cooperation between the two institutions, it was felt that more could be done to consolidate the progress made. A task force of four (two members from OAU and two from the United Nations) was established to consolidate the two reports.

7. The present report provides an account of the activities undertaken in various areas by both organizations since 1998.

8. In a related exercise, the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa, established by the General Assembly in resolution 54/234, met in three sessions to assess the implementation of the recommendations contained in the relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/52/871-S/1998/318). The Working Group highlighted what had been achieved since the publication of the report in 1998 and also noted what remained to be achieved. The report of the Working Group is to be published as a report of the Secretary-General.

III. Priority issues and programme areas for collaboration

9. The OAU and the United Nations meeting focused on mechanisms for strengthening and enhancing collaboration. OAU presented two sets of concerns — one of priority issues around which implementable and achievable programmes should be developed; the other, of programmes specific to OAU.

10. The following issues were in the first set of concerns:

(a) Emergency preparedness and rapid response;

(b) Health crises, with special focus on HIV/AIDS (and malaria);

(c) Democracy, good governance and human rights;

(d) Debt relief, cancellation and resource flow;

(e) Information exchange and conflict management;

(f) Implementation of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty);

(g) Education.

11. It was proposed that these above-mentioned issues should be dealt with through joint programmes designed to achieve very specific objectives and catalyse action. The two organizations agreed to support each other in the implementation of such programmes.

12. The implementation would require the establishment of joint United Nations/OAU task forces consisting of United Nations partner agencies with mandates that relate to the issues identified and their OAU counterparts. It was agreed that the task forces would operate for the next two years. Each task force was to designate a lead organization. Collectively, they are to conceptualize and prepare project proposals covering their areas of work and cooperate in the implementation of the projects. They are to undertake joint resource mobilization and implementation plans. They are also to report jointly to the next OAU/United Nations consultation.

13. In the second set of concerns, the following programmes, specific to OAU, are designed to enhance the capacity of the organization:

(a) Restructuring of OAU;

(b) OAU Centre for Conflict Management;

(c) Humanitarian Affairs Unit;

(d) Division for Cooperation and Harmonization of Policies;

(e) Population policy;

(f) Gender and development.

14. The meeting agreed that the programmes being considered should complement existing bilateral programmes already being implemented. It was emphasized that the identification of areas of cooperation was without prejudice to ongoing bilateral cooperation between individual United Nations agencies or groups and OAU but was only an indication of collective commitments made at the meeting.

15. Following extensive discussion of the proposals made, it was agreed that the next phase of United Nations/OAU cooperation should avoid generalities in programme formulation. It was also agreed that the experience gained during the past two years of cooperation should inform future programme design and implementation measures. Programmes should be focused, specific, clear and achievable, with clearly specified time-frames, benchmarks and indicators as measures of specific goals attained.

A. Priority issues

Emergency preparedness and rapid response

16. The two organizations agreed that recent experiences on the continent have made manifest the need for Africa to coordinate efforts and to build capacities to respond more rapidly and decisively to humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters on the continent. The floods in Mozambique, the cyclone in Madagascar and drought in Ethiopia combined to underscore the need for better preparedness in Africa for rapid response in disaster management and humanitarian emergencies. In this regard the meeting agreed on the following:

Objectives

(a) Strengthen the OAU institutional and human resources capacity in the areas of humanitarian

early warning, rapid disaster response and the timely and effective coordination and interaction with member States and regional organizations in disaster situations;

(b) Assist OAU in designing a mechanism for dealing with complex humanitarian emergencies and rapid response to natural disasters;

(c) Strengthen coordination between OAU and the United Nations system in addressing complex humanitarian emergencies and disaster measurement and response;

(d) Enhance the role of OAU in advocacy in natural disasters;

(e) Strengthen the role of OAU in facilitating and supporting United Nations agencies and regional economic communities in responding to disasters in Africa;

(f) Provide OAU with timely and authoritative information on disasters in Africa;

Activities planned

(a) Follow up on the decisions contained in the African common position on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (E/ECA/CM/20/30);

(b) Follow up on the recommendations and the plan of action that will result from the United Nations/OAU African symposium on natural disasters and on the preparation of a calendar and programme of work for the implementation of the recommendations and the plan of action;

(c) Strengthen the role of the OAU secretariat on humanitarian early warning to enhance timely collection, analysis and dissemination of information on natural disasters and other emergencies;

(d) Identify and put into operation other interventions in support of the operational activities of the United Nations agencies and African non-governmental organizations in response to natural disasters in Africa;

(e) Strengthen the institutional capacity of OAU for coordinating and advocating action in support of OAU member States;

(f) Strengthen the role of the regional economic communities in addressing humanitarian emergencies and disaster management;

(g) Assess the capacity needs of the regional economic communities;

(h) Assist in institutional and human resource capacity-building;

(i) Assist in designing and supporting programmes for early warning and disaster response in the regional economic communities.

17. The following organizations agreed to participate in a task force that should address this issue: OAU, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (OCHA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Other members may be proposed by the OAU/United Nations regional symposium on natural disasters. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs/OAU will be the lead organizations.

18. It was agreed that the terms of reference of the task force should include the development of a strategy that will facilitate and enhance the responses of African institutions, such as the regional economic communities, civil society and Governments, to natural disasters in Africa.

19. Related to this is the report on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which is to be presented to the General Assembly. Plans are now under way for an independent evaluation of the New Agenda, which would lead to its final review in 2001. The United Nations will seek OAU's input and collaboration, both for the evaluation and the review.

Health crises, with special focus on HIV/AIDS (and malaria)

20. The United Nations and OAU recognized that HIV/AIDS is no longer just a health issue; it affects all facets of society and is of concern to all development sectors. They agreed that note should be taken of the latest developments, including:

(a) Statements on HIV/AIDS in the OAU Declarations of Dakar/Ngor and of Tunis;

(b) The establishment of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS);

(c) The commitment by the United Nations Secretary-General to lead the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa, at a high-level meeting on 16-17 December 1999;

(d) The historic discussion by the Security Council on 10 January 2000 in which it was concluded that AIDS is an emergency and a threat to the African continent;

(e) The decision by ECA to focus debate at the African Development Forum in 2000 on the theme "HIV/AIDS: the greatest leadership challenge";

(f) The decision by the OAU Secretary-General to devote a session during the most recent Summit of OAU African leaders (Lomé, Togo, July 2000), to a discussion of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Objectives

21. It was agreed that United Nations/OAU collaboration would aim to support the intensification of national, regional and international programmes and activities. The task force — comprising primarily, on the United Nations side, of UNAIDS co-sponsoring agencies and other interested organizations, and of OAU — is to articulate a plan of action to be achieved in the next two years. The task force will work on the following:

(a) Assessment of all ongoing activities by OAU and United Nations partners;

(b) Advocacy to bring about sustained political commitment to appropriate policies relevant to HIV/AIDS prevention and care at all levels;

(c) Mobilization of adequate resources for prevention, care and impact alleviation;

(d) Support to expanded national responses;

(e) Identification of mechanisms to enhance collaboration and coordination at the international, country and local levels.

Activities planned

22. The task force is to propose milestones and benchmarks to guide the collaboration along the following terms of reference: building a continent-wide coalition to contain HIV/AIDS, consisting of a social and political movement and high-level political commitment; sensitizing and mobilizing leaders at all levels of society; and urging regional and subregional African institutions and the United Nations to augment national and sectoral policies.

Democracy, good governance and human rights

23. The two organizations observed that there are many ongoing initiatives by the United Nations agencies and OAU for addressing the interrelated challenges of democratization, governance and the protection of human rights. The immediate priority is to maximize the impact of all of these initiatives.

Objectives

(a) Improve coordination for facilitating the implementation of selected African-driven programmes in these areas;

(b) Galvanize support for the implementation of specific programmes on governance and human rights.

Activities planned

24. The concerned agencies are to collaborate on effective implementation of the relevant aspects of the Grand Bay (Mauritius) Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted by the First OAU Ministerial Conference on Human Rights in Africa (16 April 1999). More specifically, the following activities should be given particular attention over the next two years:

(a) Assist OAU member States to develop national plans of action in the field of human rights in order to ensure a focused and systematic approach to the promotion and protection of human rights on the continent. OAU and the concerned United Nations agencies should collaborate effectively in preparations for the proposed subregional workshops for the promotion of these national plans of action;

(b) Sensitize OAU member States on the need to subscribe to those human rights instruments (by way of signature and ratification) that have already been adopted by OAU, so as to ensure their effective and concrete implementation. Particular efforts should be made, especially with the collaboration and assistance of UNICEF, to popularize the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which entered into force in November 1999. Similarly, the efforts being made by OAU to secure speedy ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, which has so far been ratified by only three countries, should be supported through appropriate advocacy programmes;

(c) Improve coordination between United Nations agencies and OAU on issues related to democratization and governance.

25. It was agreed that the following organizations will constitute a task force to deal with this issue in the next two years and jointly to report progress made at the next review exercise: UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNCHR), UNHCR, ECA, UNICEF, UNESCO and OAU. It was suggested that the task force consider dividing its work between two subcommittees, one on democracy and governance, and another on human rights. OAU and UNCHR will be the lead institutions.

Debt relief, cancellation and resource flow

26. Africa's external debt problem has become so serious that it features prominently in discussions at meetings of African and non-African summits. At the fourth OAU Extraordinary Summit, in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Algerian and South African Presidents were requested to engage Africa's creditors with a view to securing total debt cancellation.

Objective

27. The goal of OAU/United Nations cooperation in this area is to secure total debt cancellation in favour of African countries.

Activities planned

(a) Advocate and promote the idea of debt cancellation.

(b) Provide information, data and arguments in support of debt cancellation.

(c) Network and make contact with the non-governmental organizations that are leading the campaign on debt cancellation.

(d) Mobilize international support for debt cancellation.

28. The task force, composed of OAU, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, ECA and other United Nations bodies to be designated by the resident coordinator, was to initiate the required actions. The lead organization is OAU.

29. While preparatory activities were to start immediately (building the data/information base and contacting non-governmental organizations, major activities were to be launched after the OAU Summit in July 2000, which was expected to receive the report of the two Presidents. Under project RAF/98/005: UNDP Africa Policy on Debt, UNDP organized workshops and studies to review ongoing capacity-building initiatives for debt management in sub-Saharan Africa.

30. On the advocacy level, UNDP has been promoting the cancellation of the bilateral and multilateral debt of highly indebted African countries. This work is being done in collaboration with various partners, including the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA), research institutions such as Harvard University, non-governmental organizations such as Jubilee 2000, and other United Nations bodies, such as ECA.

31. On the operational level, UNDP is working with African countries in the preparation of plans for debt reduction and, when feasible, debt cancellation. In this endeavour, UNDP is collaborating closely with the Bretton Woods institutions, ECA and other bilateral partners.

Information exchange and conflict management

32. Given the important role that early warning and information exchange can play in the work of OAU and the United Nations, especially in the area of peace and security, OAU and the United Nations system undertook to engage in a more systematic exchange of information, in the light of the recognized need to share responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in Africa.

Objectives

33. The key objective is to enhance the capacity for the exchange of information and knowledge of OAU and the United Nations for the effective management of conflicts in the region. The programme should enhance information-sharing on natural or man-made disasters affecting the African population. Both the United Nations and OAU agreed to work towards the establishment of the direct linkages between their situation rooms as soon as possible. Under the UNDP RAF/97/028 project, a specialized institution has been identified to work with the OAU Centre for Conflict Management (CMC) to establish a module to be used for the analysis of relevant information to predict conflicts in Africa and to provide early warning information to the OAU Central Organ for pre-emptive actions to be taken to avert full-blown conflicts.

Activities planned

34. The implementation of this project is expected to start in October 2000 and should continue over a development period of 12 months. A task force was established, composed of OAU, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR and UNICEF. OAU was designated as the lead organization. OAU and the United Nations agreed to:

(a) Enhance coordination;

(b) Minimize duplication of efforts;

(c) Enhance effectiveness in the areas of their respective mandates;

(d) Incorporate subregional mechanisms for conflict management in these arrangements;

(e) Establish links between the situation rooms of OAU and the situation centre of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Implementation of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC)

35. Strengthening the regional economic communities was recognized as of priority concern by the fourth OAU Extraordinary Summit (Sirte, September 1999), and there is still need for further strengthening.

Objectives

(a) Assess the priority needs of the regional economic communities and how they are to be met;

(b) Strengthen the capacity of the communities with regard to programme formulation and implementation;

(c) Ensure that the priorities of the communities are reflected in OAU/UNDP/ECA cooperation programmes/projects;

(d) Promote effective resource mobilization and utilization and avoid duplication through prompt coordination and cooperation;

(e) Enhance the capacity of the OAU secretariat for the implementation of the Treaty.

Activities planned

36. A task force on the implementation of this programme was to be established consisting of OAU, ECA and UNDP. The following activities were proposed:

(a) Needs assessment mission to regional economic communities, where needed;

(b) Meeting (OAU/ECA/UNDP) with regional economic communities on the integration of their needs/priorities into programmes funded by UNDP or executed by ECA;

(c) Meeting of the Committee of Secretariat Officials and the Committee on Coordination under the protocol on relations between the African Economic Community (AEC) and the regional economic communities;

(d) Identification and dissemination of best practices among the regional economic communities;

(e) Joint training programme whereby the staff of OAU/AEC and the regional economic communities join together to learn and/or share concepts and experiences on general and sectoral issues/topics pertaining to economic integration;

(f) Study tours between the regional economic communities, and between them and OAU/AEC.

37. It was agreed that action should be initiated as follows:

(a) Meeting of the task force (OAU/ECA/UNDP) before the end of June 2000;

(b) Meeting with regional economic communities before the end of November 2000, followed by the meeting of the Committee on Coordination and the Committee of Secretariat Officials.

38. The ongoing UNDP project (RAF/94/008) should be extended and expanded, with increased resources, to take into account the new requirements and responsibilities of AEC, in line with the Sirte Declaration. The framework for its implementation should include execution by the beneficiary.

39. The task force (OAU/ECA/UNDP) met in July 2000 for a review of the UNDP project on the Treaty (RAF/94/008), to consider progress and explore the way forward. The meeting determined that the programme had made significant contributions to the launching of the operation of AEC through the strengthening of the OAU/AEC secretariat, the strengthening of the regional economic communities, the rationalization of ECA-sponsored institutions and other subregional organizations and the preparation of the Treaty protocols. It was recommended that the current phase of the programme be continued up to December 2001, focusing the programme on attainable outputs. A programme evaluation should be undertaken for the design of a second phase.

Education

40. In view of the importance of education, OAU and the United Nations system shall undertake collaborative activities within the framework of the OAU Decade of Education and the World Declaration on Education for All. OAU, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP and WFP will collaborate to enhance the capacity of member States in the area of education.

B. Programmes specific to OAU

Restructuring of OAU

41. The OAU programme of reform and restructuring was identified as a top priority area for cooperation between OAU and the United Nations. Its activities included: change management; training at all levels in management and skills development, for groups and individual staff members; institution-building support for the operationalization of the new departments, especially in new areas such as policy and programme coordination, resource mobilization and strengthening the capacity of other departments; development of new systems, methods of work and procedures, and the development of manuals; information technology; review and development, where necessary, of new rules and regulations; assistance in the recruitment of the new staff; and mainstreaming gender issues in the new structure.

42. It was agreed that the OAU and UNDP should be the lead organization. The ongoing UNDP projects (RAF/94/008 and RAF/197/028) should be reviewed to incorporate the new priorities of OAU relevant to the two project activities; and UNDP/OAU are to mobilize the United Nations system to cooperate in a mini omnibus project in support of the reform and the restructuring exercise. OAU is to prepare a document as the basis for the areas and activities to be included in the omnibus project.

43. A follow-up report indicates that the review process on the UNDP projects was to be carried out through a tripartite meeting in September/October 2000. The meeting would make recommendations. Further, OAU is actively preparing a document that will define the needs and activities to be integrated into a mini omnibus training programme. This exercise should be facilitated by the reform and restructuring programme being implemented by OAU.

OAU Centre for Conflict Management

44. This programme is to support the OAU efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Conflict Management Centre (CMC). Specific areas of support are to be developed by CMC in collaboration with the relevant United Nations agencies and support measures identified, to be carried out within the biennium.

45. A UNDP project (RAF/997/028) has contributed to strengthening the staff of CMC through the recruitment of three information analysts and two research assistants who are currently playing a key role in the production of situation reports and in the analysis of information for early warning of potential conflicts in Africa. These experts are also assisting CMC in building an information data bank for OAU.

46. An Intranet infrastructure has been established in OAU headquarters for the collection of relevant

information for analysis and for the establishment of linkages with the members of the OAU Central Organ in Addis Ababa, and subsequently, with African subregional organizations.

47. A task force composed of UNDP and three United Nations Secretariat bodies — the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs — was required to work closely with CMC in order to ensure effective implementation of the CMC programme, including the implementation of the 1998 recommendations that still remain relevant. The task force was required to develop a plan of action.

Humanitarian Affairs Unit

48. The objective of the programme is to strengthen the Division for Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Affairs in order to enable it to play an advocacy role in humanitarian issues. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, was requested to second an officer to the Division to provide help on strengthening the capacity of the Division to address humanitarian issues. The United Nations supported the idea, and a decision on this matter is awaited.

Division for Cooperation and Harmonization of Policies

49. The objective of this programme is to strengthen the Division for Cooperation and Harmonization of Policies of OAU, in order to enhance its capacity to deal with human rights issues. The priority need identified by OAU is the deployment by UNCHR of an officer who is an expert on human rights issues.

Population policy

50. This programme is a continuation of UNFPA cooperation with the OAU secretariat to sustain population and development activities and to improve the quality of life in Africa. Its objectives are to develop a framework for the development of appropriate strategies for strengthening the implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of population policies in Africa, and to continue to strengthen the institutional capacity of the OAU secretariat and the African Population Commission (APC) to enhance the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) through information, education and communication (IEC) and advocacy interventions.

51. The programme will undertake the following activities:

(a) Organize brainstorming workshops and revise the OAU Population and Development Policy Programme;

(b) Undertake on-the-job training for relevant OAU staff;

(c) Produce occasional papers on the priority areas of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and ICPD Programme of Action;

(d) Organize workshops/seminars/symposia for OAU staff, the African diplomatic community and other target groups;

(e) Organize regular meetings of the APC General Assembly and the Bureau;

(f) Organize IEC workshops for officers of selected countries on such issues as reproductive health/family planning, HIV/AIDS, migration, etc.;

(g) Monitor population and development activities in member States through country questionnaires.

52. The relevant Task Force consists of OAU, UNFPA, ECA and the African Development Bank; the lead agency is UNFPA.

Gender and development

53. In line with the Dakar/Ngor Declaration, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the plan of action for accelerating the empowerment of women, as expressed in the ICPD Programme of Action, the United Nations system will undertake to participate in the development of a policy framework on gender for OAU. ECA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and the Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Secretariat, are to assist OAU in developing a training framework and instruments in the gender area for OAU staff, African ambassadors based in Addis Ababa, and Recs. ECA, UNDP, UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women, and UNFPA will work with OAU in defining the modus operandi for greater

presence and involvement of women in decision-making at all levels. They will also assist OAU in mainstreaming gender into the formulation of the new programmes of reform and renewal of the Organization. A task force composed of OAU, ECA, UNDP, UNHCR, the Division and the Department of Political Affairs will be established to assist the African Women Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD) in the following areas:

(a) Resource mobilization;

(b) Establishment of a secretariat and support structures;

(c) Support for the implementation of the programmes of the Committee.

54. For monitoring progress in the implementation of the gender programme, the meeting agreed on reviews by the United Nations system and OAU every six months, annually (mid term) and biennially. It was decided that the next mid-term review would take place in Addis Ababa in April 2001. It was further agreed that the next biennial meeting of the two organizations should take place in Addis Ababa.

IV. Cooperation in the areas of peace and security

A. Department of Political Affairs

55. Through the Department of Peacekeeping Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations continued with its extensive collaboration with OAU in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution. The Secretary-General of the United Nations consults frequently with the Secretary-General of OAU on issues of peace and security relating to the African region. These consultations are often aimed at preventing the escalation of conflicts in the region or exploring appropriate frameworks and mechanisms for collaboration between the two organizations for the management and resolution of conflicts. The Department maintains close contact with the Central Organ of OAU on issues of peace and security, in order to ensure that both organizations share information on their activities and to ensure that the two organizations coordinate and enhance each other's efforts with regard to issues relating to peace and security. Communiqués of the Central Organ are regularly shared with the United Nations, including the Secretary-General and the Security Council. In the same vein, the United Nations Secretariat keeps OAU informed of its activities, through the United Nations Liaison Office to the OAU in Addis Ababa, and also through consultations with officials of the United Nations, including the Secretary-General and special envoys appointed by him.

56. The heightened rate of activities and collaboration between the United Nations and OAU has increased pressure on the United Nations liaison office, which is expected to act as the focal point for information from the Secretariat of the United Nations. It is evident that, with the commencement of the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Settlement of the Dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/1999/794, annex III), the liaison office will become even more important.

57. In the past year, the United Nations and OAU continued to cooperate in trying to resolve the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Mohamed Sahnoun, remained engaged with OAU, which led the mediation efforts.

58. Following the acceptance by the two parties of the modalities for the implementation of the Framework Agreement, at the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in Algiers on 14 July 1999, and in the context of the OAU mediation efforts led by Mr. Ahmed Ouyahia, Special Envoy of the then-Chair of OAU, experts from the OAU (Algeria and the OAU secretariat), the United Nations and the United States collaborated in drafting a document that established the necessary details for the implementation of the Framework Agreement. After presentation of the document, entitled "Technical arrangements for the implementation of the OAU Framework Agreement and its modalities" to the parties, and upon its acceptance by Eritrea, Mr. Sahnoun continued his collaboration with Mr. Ouyahia in responding to Ethiopia's requests for clarification.

59. In view of the call in the document for the deployment of military observers by OAU with the assistance of the United Nations, to be followed by the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, the United Nations and OAU, together with the United States, undertook contingency planning in order to expedite deployment once an agreement was reached.

60. The United Nations will continue to collaborate with OAU in supporting the subsequent phase of its mediation efforts on the outstanding issues such as the delimitation and demarcation off disputed territory, in order to help the parties reach a comprehensive peace agreement.

61. Senior representatives of OAU actively participated in special meetings organized by the United Nations on Burundi and Somalia. Meetings of the Special Envoys/Representatives on Burundi were held on 18 October 1999 and 12 May 2000. The Ambassadorial Meetings of the External Actors on Somalia were held on 1 September 1999, 3 December 1999 and 24 April 2000.

62. On the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations and OAU worked in close cooperation in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The United Nations has been providing support to OAU and the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, Sir Ketumule Masire, former President of Botswana. According to the Lusaka Agreement, the Inter-Congolese Dialogue was to be managed by OAU; however, the United Nations was approached for assistance, which has been largely directed towards the organizational aspects of the work of the facilitator. In consultation with OAU, the United Nations Secretariat worked with the facilitator to prepare an assessment of his requirements and encouraged donors to contribute to the cost of his operations.

63. At a donors' meeting co-chaired by the United Nations and OAU, on 27 January, the two organizations called on Member States to provide assistance through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Democratic Republic of the Congo or to the OAU Peace Fund.

64. The United Nations has taken steps to place the expertise of its staff at the disposal of the facilitator, offering material and logistical support. It has established 13 posts in the staffing table of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). In consultation with the facilitator, the Secretariat has also made arrangements for a senior adviser, Mr. Albert Tevoedjre, to travel with the facilitator during some of his consultations in the region. The senior adviser assisted in the organization of the preparatory meeting for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, held in Cotonou. MONUC also provided air transportation to the facilitator.

65. In another effort to unblock the impasse in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, the Secretary-General appointed General Abdulsalam Abubakar, former Head of State of Nigeria, as his Special Envoy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. General Abubakar travelled to the region between 20 and 24 August 2000. He consulted with the President of Zambia and convenor of the Lusaka peace process on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, met with the Secretary-General of OAU, and held extensive discussions with the President and Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 30 August 2000, he briefed the Security Council on the outcome of his trip. As a result of this démarche, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo removed some of the restrictions that had been placed on the operations and deployment of United Nations military observers. However, there was no compromise on the Government's objection to the facilitation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue by Mr. Masire.

B. Department of Peacekeeping Operations

66. Through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations cooperates with OAU and African subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in activities aimed at enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity. In Western Sahara the United Nations continues to cooperate with OAU in furthering the peace process.

67. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, close coordination continues between MONUC and OAU, including co-deployment with and logistical support to the Joint Military Committee (JMC). The Department has posted a military liaison officer to the OAU office in Addis Ababa in order to enhance information-sharing and coordination, especially on the management of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the activities of JMC.

68. ECOWAS has played a crucial role in securing the release of United Nations personnel detained by the rebels of the Revolutionary United Front and continues

to provide significant support in ongoing efforts of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), to assist in establishing lasting peace there. On 11 September the Secretary-General opened the first meeting of the coordination mechanism between the United Nations, ECOWAS and the Government of Sierra Leone, convened to review the situation in the country and discuss ways of reactivating the peace process.

69. The United Nations and OAU are also cooperating closely in the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Settlement of the Dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) has begun deployment of military observers to the two countries. Active preparation is under way to deploy peacekeepers in the temporary security zone along their borders. The United Nations will continue to assist in the implementation of the Agreement and provide support for the continued efforts of the OAU mediation.

70. Under the Agreement, the parties requested that a peacekeeping mission be deployed by the United Nations under the auspices of OAU, as the facilitator of the Agreement. The parties also called on OAU and the United Nations to act as guarantors of the Agreement. Accordingly, the United Nations and OAU must work closely together in carrying out those requests. Detailed discussions were held by the United Nations reconnaissance mission and the OAU in that regard.

71. Three OAU liaison officers, to be stationed in each capital, would maintain close contact with UNMEE and the host country's military headquarters. They would also keep OAU headquarters informed of the activities of UNMEE and of progress made in the implementation of the Agreement.

72. OAU would designate a senior representative to the meetings of the Military Coordination Commission. One of the OAU liaison officers would represent OAU at working-level meetings of the Commission or when Commission teams investigate complaints.

73. While OAU and the United Nations would maintain separate identities and sources of funding for their respective activities, UNMEE would cooperate with OAU by providing, to the extent possible, logistical assistance and the necessary security for OAU participation in joint activities.

74. On the Burundi peace process, and at the request of the facilitator, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in coordination with the Department of Political Affairs, has been providing expert advice to the facilitation team, particularly on the military aspects of its implementation.

Assistance in peacekeeping training and planning

75. The United Nations cooperates with OAU and African subregional organizations in peacekeeping training, through its training assistance teams and train-the-trainer programmes, conducted at the United Nations Staff College in Turin twice a year. It provides technical support to joint peacekeeping exercises, conducts mine action and awareness programmes in a number of African countries, and promotes greater African participation in the United Nations standby arrangement system.

76. The United Nations has continued its efforts to facilitate contacts between troop-contributing States and regional organizations and those donor States that can provide logistical support, including equipment. The Secretary-General has also continued his appeal for adequate and flexible contributions to both the United Nations Trust Fund and the OAU Peace Fund in support of peacekeeping activities in Africa.

V. Cooperation with UNHCR

77. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) was represented at the twenty-seventh session of the African Commission on Human Rights and Peoples' Rights (Algiers, 27-30 April 2000). At that meeting, consultations were held with the Bureau of the Commission and its Secretary, in order to assess the ongoing assistance to the Commission and make recommendations for the future. Within the ongoing OHCHR project for strengthening the capacity of the Commission, the following activities were implemented:

(a) Holding of a seminar on the right to a fair trial (Senegal, September 1999);

(b) Support to an ad hoc group of experts on the draft protocol on the rights of communication Africa;

(c) Drafting of a manual on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights;

(d) Training, to be undertaken, of two junior officers of the African Commission in the field of communications handling and State reporting.

78. In close consultation with OAU and the Department of Political Affairs, UNCHR established the International Commission of Inquiry for Togo.

VI. Cooperation in economic and social development

Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries

79. The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, cooperates with OAU in economic and social development. The modalities of cooperation include the participation of OAU in expert group meetings and workshops organized by the Office as part of its catalytic activities in African development; consultations with the Office of the Permanent Observer for the OAU to the United Nations in New York for briefings organized by the Office for African delegations on topical priority development issues; mobilization, through consultations and meetings, of the support of the OAU Office in New York for important global meetings on Africa; and sharing with OAU, among others, information and publications of the Office on African development issues.

80. The Office has collaborated with OAU in the following activities since January 1999:

(a) Ad hoc expert group meeting on the diversification of African economies. The meeting, co-organized by the Office of the Special Coordinator and UNCTAD and held in November 1999, was aimed at evaluating the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the General Assembly and addressing the bottlenecks in implementation. Participants from African countries, African regional organizations, including OAU, and international and non-governmental organizations participated in the meeting, which adopted a draft operational framework for action on diversification of African economies;

(b) United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The Office of the Special Coordinator invited and received inputs from OAU, among other organizations and agencies, in preparation of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the New Agenda. The report provided a brief on OAU's activities in the implementation of the priority areas of the New Agenda, including the deliberations of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (Abuja, Nigeria, May 2000); and the declaration adopted by the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government (Lomé, Togo, June 2000);

(c) Asia/Africa Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Value-added Activities in the Informal Sector in Africa. The Office of the Special Coordinator in collaboration with the Government of Kenya, organized the Expert Group Meeting (Nairobi, 8-10 December 1999), at which OAU was represented. The Meeting reviewed the factors that constrain informal-sector operators from carrying out value-added activities in the informal sector in Africa. It recommended that OSCAL, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies and African regional organizations, including OAU, organize a regional workshop to highlight the role, nature and scope of policies and strategies for enhancing productivity and value-added opportunities in the informal sector.

Africa/Europe Summit

81. The Africa/Europe Summit (Cairo, April 2000), co-sponsored by OAU and the European Union (EU), aimed at harnessing mutual partnerships between Africa and Europe and agreeing on priority areas and the role of Europe in supporting social and economic development in Africa. The Office of the Special Coordinator actively participated in the Summit and contributed to the outcome — the Cairo Declaration and the Cairo Plan of Action. The Summit gave the Office an opportunity to interact with OAU and exchange views on critical development issues and challenges in Africa.

Third Asia/Africa Forum

82. OAU participated in the Third Asia/Africa Forum (AAF III) (Kuala Lumpur, May 2000), co-organized by the Governments of Malaysia and Japan, UNDP, the Office of the Special Coordinator and the Global Coalition for Africa. The Forum sought to enhance

Asia-Africa cooperation and to build on the achievements of the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) and the first two Asia-Africa Forums. The Third Forum adopted the Kuala Lumpur New Millennium Statement, focusing on the enhancement of Asia/Africa cooperation, especially in the agriculture sector and private-sector development.

Follow-up to TICAD

83. The OAU participated in the first review meeting (Lusaka, Zambia, November 1999), of the Tokyo Agenda for Action, adopted at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), for eastern and southern African countries. The meeting assessed progress in the implementation of the Tokyo Agenda in social development and shared experience in implementing priority actions with a view to overcoming constraints and identifying best practices.

Open-ended ad hoc working group of the General Assembly

84. The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries provided technical backstopping to the working group on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa and worked closely with OAU in ensuring that Africans articulated their views and concerns on critical issues affecting African development. The working group prepared its report in July 2000 for the consideration of the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

Follow-up to the Seoul Framework

85. OAU participated in the Seoul Forum on Cooperation in Export Promotion (Seoul, December 1998). The outcome of the Forum was the adoption of the Seoul Framework for Cooperation and the establishment of a steering committee to follow-up on the recommendations of the Seoul Forum. OAU is one of the four members of the steering committee. As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Seoul Framework, the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Office of the Special Coordinator designed a training programme on trade and investment promotion, which was held in Seoul in July/August 2000 and was attended by policy makers from 18 African countries.

VII. Cooperation with the Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs

86. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, continued its efforts to improve coordination with OAU in the humanitarian field. The Office supported the work of the United Nations Liaison Office with OAU on issues of humanitarian access, protection of civilians in armed conflict, contingency planning for assistance to internally displaced persons, mine awareness and disaster response.

87. OAU actively participated in a workshop organized by the Office in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 13 to 15 March 2000, to promote an African policy dialogue on the issue of the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The Office envisaged the organization of two other workshops during 2000, in eastern and western Africa, to promote further an exchange on the issue of protection of civilians.

88. The Office will continue to strengthen collaboration with the Conflict Prevention and Management Unit of OAU to ensure that humanitarian issues such as the protection of civilians, respect for the principles of humanitarian operations (impartiality, neutrality and independence), early warning and disaster prevention are incorporated into the main agenda of OAU. In this regard, the Office will strive to ensure effective exchange and analysis of information. In particular, it envisages the organization of training, workshops and seminars on early warning.

89. During a meeting in 1999 in Addis Ababa, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Secretary-General of OAU discussed the need for examining the impact of natural disasters on African societies. Subsequently their discussions led to the concept of an African symposium on natural disasters. It would be a forum for South/South cooperation and exchange of information and of best practices, covering the entire spectrum of disaster management, from response to mitigation and prevention, and including institutional arrangements within existing subregional entities. The Office would fund the participation of key national

officials and representatives from regional groups. Convenient dates and the venue of the symposium are being considered (see also Sect. X).

VIII. Cooperation with UNHCR

90. In order to promote the implementation of programmes in democracy, good governance and human rights with a particular focus on refugees, OAU and UNHCR organized a special OAU/UNHCR meeting of government and non-governmental experts on the thirtieth anniversary of the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969 OAU Refugee Convention) (27-29 March 2000, Conakry, Guinea). The aim of the meeting was to formulate concrete proposals to be incorporated into a plan of action which would help to strengthen and enhance the implementation of the Refugee Convention, the regime of international protection for asylum seekers, refugees and returnees, and facilitate the search for effective durable solutions to refugee problems in the years to come. The plan was adopted by the OAU Council of Ministers at its seventy-second Ordinary Session (Lomé, Togo, July 2000).

91. Pursuant to the plan, OAU/UNHCR will hold a joint regional judges round table in Addis Ababa, from 14 to 15 November 2000. Judges, magistrates and academicians from East Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region will attend. The purpose is to study the manner in which the judicial and administration system function in relation to the rights of refugees and to recommend ways and means by which the treatment of refugees can be improved in that regard.

92. UNHCR is currently sharing information with the OAU Centre on Conflict Management. In July 2000 UNHCR and OAU held a meeting to identify areas of strengthening cooperation in the field of conflict management.

IX. Cooperation with WHO

Outcome of the Abuja Summit on Roll-back Malaria

93. Since the OAU/United Nations meeting in April 2000, WHO and OAU have cooperated in all matters that arise with regard to roll-back malaria (RBM) and acted together to organize the African Summit on Roll-back Malaria (Abuja, Nigeria, 25 April 2000). The Summit reflected a real convergence of political momentum, institutional synergy and technical consensus on malaria.

94. Forty-four of the 50 malaria-affected countries in Africa attended the Summit. Nineteen delegations were led by Heads of State, while the remaining delegations were led by senior governmental officials. The Summit was also attended by a delegation from OAU. The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Vice-President of the World Bank, Executive Director of UNICEF, Director of UNDP/Africa and representatives of other United Nations agencies and partners also attended. His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria, chaired the Summit.

95. The Summit concluded with the signing of the Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action, which were endorsed by the Lomé Summit in July 2000. The OAU General Secretariat will, in collaboration with WHO and other partners, take action accordingly regarding the endorsement.

96. WHO, in collaboration with OAU and the Nigerian Embassy in Addis Ababa, succeeded in getting the African leaders to commemorate the Abuja Summit by declaring 25 April of each year as African Malaria Day and calling upon the United Nations Secretary-General to declare the coming decade, 2001-2010, a decade for malaria control.

97. By signing the Declaration, the African leaders rededicated themselves to the principles and targets of the Harare Declaration of 1997. They committed themselves to an intensive effort to halve the malaria mortality for Africa's people by 2010, by implementing strategies and actions for roll-back malaria, as agreed at the Summit. The African leaders requested WHO to follow up on the implementation of the Declaration, to report annually to OAU and to seek collaboration with United Nations agencies and other partners.

98. In the context of fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, WHO, in collaboration with OAU and UNAIDS, participated actively in the meeting of Ministers of Health on HIV/AIDS in May 2000 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The outcome of the meeting was a contribution to the deliberations at the thirty-sixth OAU Summit (Lomé, July 2000) at which a declaration on HIV/AIDS in Africa was adopted. The Heads of State decided, among other things, to recommit themselves and their Governments

to the principles and actions enunciated in previous declarations, decisions and recommendations on controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa and to provide leadership for the activities of the national AIDS commissions or council where they existed and ensure that they are established where they do not exist. OAU is expecting WHO to follow up on the implementation of the Declaration and provide recommendations accordingly.

99. The OAU Assembly endorsed a proposal to hold an African summit on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases in the year 2001 and accepted an offer from Nigeria to host the summit. WHO is expected to be fully involved in the preparation of the summit by providing the required technical supports.

X. Cooperation in disaster management

100. In the framework of the African common position on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (E/ECA/CM/20/30), the Secretary-General of OAU and the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs met in July 1999 at Addis Ababa and agreed to strengthen the OAU United Nations cooperation in the sphere of disaster prevention, management and coordination in Africa.

101. The two Executives agreed to organize a joint regional symposium that will bring together African governmental representatives, appropriate United Nations agencies and regional economic communities to discuss and chart a way forward for coordinated disaster management in Africa. The global objective of the symposium will be to establish a framework of action and appropriate mechanisms to reduce the increasing social, economic and environmental impacts of natural disasters in Africa. An OAU/United Nations consultative committee, including WHO, has been preparing for the regional symposium. WHO is providing a consultant to assist OAU in the preparations. The symposium will take place in 2000 in Addis Ababa.

XI. Cooperation with UNFPA

102. One of the recommendations made at the United Nations/OAU cooperation meeting was that UNFPA should assist OAU to strengthen its population and development activities. Following the meeting, the task force of the joint secretariats of OAU/ECA/ADB and UNFPA met to review the population and development activities of OAU. The meeting considered the preparations being made for the fourth General Assembly of the African Population Commission (APC), a body established by OAU under the auspices of UNFPA, to advocate for the integration of population issues into development activities in Africa.

103. UNFPA sponsored the second meeting of the working group of the joint OAU/ECA/ADB secretariat (14-16 June 2000, Dakar, Senegal). The meeting reviewed the main findings and recommendations of the recent review process for the International Conference on Population and Development and made proposals for the administrative and substantive aspects of preparation for the next review, 10 years after the Conference.

104. UNFPA continues to provide support to OAU for the implementation of UNDP project RAF/96/P13: Strengthening the population and development activities of OAU. The following activities have been implemented since the last United Nations/OAU meeting:

(a) On-the-job training for a number of OAU staff members on population and development issues at the Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC);

(b) Occasional papers have been produced, on population and the environment and the demographic transition in Africa. More papers are being produced for presentation to the APC General Assembly, to be held in May 2001;

(c) Questionnaires are being prepared for assessing the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action in all member States of OAU. The result of the assessment will be presented at the APC General Assembly.

105. In addition, UNFPA country offices and the UNFPA country support teams assisted OAU in preparing a new project which will seek to strengthen the institutional capacities of the OAU AEC and of APC, to enable them to sustain their information, education and communication activities and advocacy activities among African countries, towards improvement of the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Dakar/Ngor Declaration. Is it expected that the project will commence in January 2001.